Devotion on Book of Colossians (Chapter 1 v9-14) - 10 May 2014, Anno Domini



9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; 12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: (Col 1:9-14)

 We continue today with an amplification of prayer as a Pillar of the Faith. The salient principle of prayer that so often fails of our understanding is that prayer is not intended to be a shopping list of OUR wants and desires, but a seeking after the will and guidance of God. So we spend all of our time in prayer telling god what we WANT, and the answer God gives (of what we NEED) goes unheard and unheeded. God knows our hearts far better than we know them ourselves. God may often grant, in answer to prayer, that for which we did not ask, but should have. ***“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered***.” (Romans 8:26)

 While it is true that we pour out our hearts before God in prayer, we should be pouring out all that is not Godly and allowing them to be filled with His Holy Will for us. Paul and Timothy make great requests in the prayer under study today, but not a single request is based on some personal need for edification of either – the prayers are clearly that God’s perfect will be done in the lives of the Church at Colossae. What request are petitioned for by Paul and Timothy. Let us examine the prayer in detail:

First and foremost is to acquire knowledge AND wisdom: “. . .***ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding***. There is nothing here that will please the world or the flesh – only God’s will. We only gain wisdom by getting knowledge and relating that knowledge to Scriptural meanings. “***The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction***.” (Prov 1:7) That beginning cold fear of God, when we realize our depravity, compels us to learn of Him. By and by the fear turns from one of fearing the ‘wrath of God’ to fearing His disappointment of us as a Father.

Secondly, the petition is “. . ***That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing***.” How do mortal men walk worthy of the Lord? In the flesh, such a goal is not possible. We must walk in the Spirit (the Holy Spirit of God) and then the Will of God becomes our own Will. “***So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*** *9****But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his***.” (Romans 8:8-9) The Holy Spirit is given – not taken! Read these verses and meditate upon their meaning: “***And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days***.” (Mark 13:20) “***Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you***.” (John 15:16)

You did not choose to follow God, He chose you, and drew you to Himself. This second petition ends… “***being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God***.” We are not saved by our good works, but we certainly are saved UNTO good works. How do you rate in the category of “increasing in the knowledge of God?” Do you attend church on Sunday, tune in a TV evangelist on weekdays, and sit comfortably with a cup of tea to be spoon-fed by these mostly money-mongers? Or do you listen to the sermon on Sunday, confirm all that is preached by the Word, and study your Bible in your quiet time at home? Do not forget the first point in the prayer of Paul, “***we do not cease to pray***.” How is that possible? Is it possible to pray while driving? YES! Is it possible to pray while taking a college exam? YES, I can vouch for that because I could not have passed some of those without a strong intervention of the Lord in opening my mind to what was already stored there. Our very lives should be a prayer to God. All that we do should be in accordance with – not our request – but His answer to our prayers.

We are called Christians because we bear a kinship and relationship to the Preeminent Christ. He is first and foremost in all that we do, think, say, hear, or feel.

 Thirdly, the petition of this prayer is for the Colossians to be “***Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness***.” Prayer strengthens our resolve and emboldens us. The increased power and resolve comes from Christ and not of ourselves. If we are called after the familial Name of Christ, we should share His characteristics of long-suffering and patience: “***For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water***.” (1 Peter 3:18-20) We ALL were sometime disobedient, were we not? The great visible characteristic that separates the Christian from the world is the joy he has under every circumstance of life. The wealthy live in opulent houses, and their lifestyles are extravagant and lavish, yet many are as miserable as an Ox mired in the mud of the field. They are miserable because their soul is dying of a thirst which they cannot quench. When they look upon the poor Christian of the rice-fields of Cambodia, they are dismayed at his joy.

 When did you last thank God for making you a partaker of blessing through His dearly beloved Son? Have you come to look upon such a blessing as merely routine to be taken for granted? Have you come to believe that after years of seniority in the church that you somehow DESERVE to be a Christian? No, you will NEVER deserve to be a Christian. You are so called by Grace and not deeds or self-worth. “***Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light****:*” Did we make ourselves partakers of our heritage in Christ, or did God MAKE us partakers thereof. Read the verse preceding again! All we can offer God that is pleasing is thankfulness and praise.

 There was a time, hopefully long past, when each Reader of this devotion sat in darkness – a prisoner to sin and bondage. He could call upon not light to brighten his condition. But the Light of the World was soon to dawn upon his sorry soul and bring him into the Light that cannot be extinguished – Jesus Christ! “***Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.***” “***The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined***.” (Isaiah 9:2) Do you remember the darkness? If so, you will yet appreciate the Light.

 Who is Christ to us? He is the One “***In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins***.” There is no redemption apart from the Blood of Christ. He is the One and Only One who, being completely innocent, that could die in our stead as payment for our sins. Had he had any sin of His own, He could not have redeemed us by paying our penalty with His own life. If He had sinned once, He would have died for His own sin instead of ours. But He was sinless, but died the death of a sinner for us. And we are forgiven by His grace and mercy.

 Is Christ preeminent in your life? If so, all who know you will recognize the fact. Every remunerative moment of leisure will be spent in learning more of Him from that beautiful Book He has written to you. “***Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me***.” (Psalms 40:7 & Hebrew 10:7)